

The Fear of God

Acts 5:7-11 Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

8 And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much."

9 Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out."

10 Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband.

11 So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

Acts 19:17-20 This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18 And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds.

19 Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver.

20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

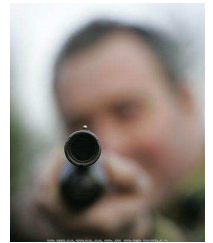
A youth pastor has youth who tell him they cannot stop the sins of the flesh. He tells them the story of a father who catches a young man groping his daughter. He points a shotgun and says, "Stop it or you will die". Will he stop it? He will or die. Those feelings and excuses will go right out the door.

I. The key to understanding these texts is the word *fear*

A. Ananias and Sapphira both die.

1. They lied to the Holy Spirit.
2. God respects private ownership. (They didn't have to give it)
3. He said he was giving all when he wasn't, deceiving the congregation to gain a reputation of greater generosity beyond what he deserved.
4. Their sin was the same as Achan in Joshua 7.
5. God's killing of them was a reiteration of the truth in the early church that they must fear the Lord. It is crucial in your service of God.

B. In Ephesus the sons of Sceva were attempting to use Jesus' name to cast out demons without serving Jesus or knowing of him.



II. What does it mean to fear the Lord?

- A. It means to fear his anger. Psalm 90:11
- B. It means to hold God in reverence and awe. Psalm 89:7
- C. It means to depart from and hate evil. Proverbs 3:7, 8:13
- D. It means to keep his commands and walk in his ways, obey his voice and walk uprightly. Proverbs 14:2; I Samuel 12:14; Deuteronomy 10:12, 5:29, 6:2
- E. It means to trust him. Psalm 115:11
- F. It means to serve him. Deuteronomy 10:12; Joshua 24:14; I Samuel 12:24
- G. It means to praise him and praise his works. Deuteronomy 10:12; Joshua 24:14; I Samuel 12:24; Psalm 139:14

III. What happens if you fear the Lord?

- A. Personally.
 1. It will help you not to sin (Exodus 20:20)
 2. God will deliver you from your enemies (II Kings 17:39)
 3. You will have wisdom (Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7)
 4. You will be honored (Psalm 15:4)
 5. You will have God's mercy (Psalm 103:11)
 6. You will be blessed (Psalm 112:1, 115:13, 128:4)
 7. God will answer your prayer (Psalm 145:19)
 8. God will give you a long life (Proverbs 10:27)



9. You will be healed (Malachi 4:2)
10. God will give you true rest (Psalm 25:12-14)
11. Your seed shall inherit the earth (Psalm 25:12-14)
12. You will be happy (Proverbs 28:14)

B. For our church.

1. True repentance will take place. (Acts 19 - They confessed their evil deeds)
2. There will be a release of power.
3. The church will grow.

Acts 5:12-15 And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch.

13 Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly.

14 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,

15 so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them.

IV. What God is saying to us:

A. Do you really fear him?

- You wouldn't be talking about people the way you do.
- You wouldn't be fornicating.
- You would not be involved in pornography.
- You wouldn't be disrespectful to the things of God.



B. Don't mistake God's grace for tolerance.

Romans 5:20-6:2 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

- Some people do stupid things because they don't fear God
- Some people think because they have sinned and nothing happened they can get away with it ~ Get ready because the hammer is going to fall.

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

1 Peter 4:17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,

20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,

21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

If the hammer has not fallen over your sin it is only because God is giving you time to repent

C. To fear the Lord is a wonderful gift. It is a sign that He loves us.